

## CATRON PAYS THE BILL.

Half a Million Bricks Paid for at Last.

The Nomination of Catron is of Some Benefit to the Territory of New Mexico.

A week ago last Saturday there was a rousing democratic ratification meeting at Santa Fe. Delegate Joseph was there and in the course of his remarks he said:

Mr. Catron is the head of the republican party in this territory and he is an attorney of ability and prominence. But what has he done for Santa Fe and New Mexico? Nothing at all to prove his faith by his works. It is true that he has built a handsome residence in your midst with the cut stone taken from the Federal building. But somehow Mr. Catron has failed to pay for the property thus taken from the national government without its consent. Fellow citizens, if I had done this instead of Mr. Catron, it is hardly necessary to say that I would not be addressing you here tonight. I would instead be keeping company with your county commissioners over at the pen. Mr. Catron has done more than this. He has built a handsome block on the east side of your plaza and it is really an ornament to your city. The bricks of which it is constructed were secured from the territorial penitentiary, but Mr. Catron has not found time to settle for them.

On Monday following the delivery of this speech, Mr. Catron found time to pay the territory for the bricks which had been used in his building. On the next day the New Mexican printed the following which is interesting reading:

The nomination of Thomas B. Catron by the Socorro convention as the republican candidate for delegate has unexpectedly proved a benefit to the people of New Mexico; for it yesterday resulted in a transfer of \$1,802.11 from the private coffers of Thomas B. Catron to the territorial treasury which has so long been kept out of its rights in this matter.

And thereby hangs a tale:

During the year 1890, Thomas B. Catron decided to build on the east side of the plaza an elaborate building to stand as an ornament to his name and to be known to generations yet unborn as the Catron block.

In casting about for the means of erecting this edifice around whose existence so many of his ardent ambitions were to cluster, Mr. Catron contrived to make a low rate for the manufacture of his brick by the penitentiary convicts.

In fact, he succeeded in getting an agreement by which brick was to be furnished him at the low rate of \$3 per 1,000, when many others who were not so fortunate were paying many times that amount in cash for such building material. Between July, 1890, and May 1891, 432,305 brick were gotten under this exceedingly advantageous contract, and utilized in the structure of this monument to a great statesman, and as subsequent facts proved, a mighty financier.

The building, like all others of its kind, grew in stature and soon its lofty walls began to overlook the foliage of the plaza. 'Tis said that as this dream of Mr. Catron's youth became more and more a reality, he was accustomed oftentimes to

stand at a respectful distance, surveying the approaching consummation of his plans with a smile, almost akin to the heavenly, illuminating his capacious countenance.

And still the building grew! For in July, 1891, 20,000 additional brick went into its spacious walls; and when a little later the turrets shone in their completed splendor in the mid-day sun, 'twas said by those who knew that 86,450 other bricks of penitentiary origin had gone into the edifice. The future private office on the corner soon stood strong and symmetrical in its entirety; and the spacious library behind, which holds innumerable volumes and Charlie Spiess, soon was the wonder of the whole New Mexican bar. But around these all, holding them in a firm embrace, were solid walls of \$3 a 1,000 brick furnished by the territory of New Mexico.

'Tis said however, in holy writ, that a day of reckoning always comes; and this inexorable rule applies even to Thomas B. Catron. For, some days later, a bill was presented reading somewhat as follows:

Dec. 23, 1891.

T. B. Catron, Dr., to the Territory of New Mexico:

For 432,305 brick from July, 1890, to May, 1891.  
20,000 brick in July, 1891.  
86,450 brick in July, 1891.

538,755—Total.  
Bricks at \$3.00 per M., \$1,616.27.

It might very readily have been suspected that so small an item as \$1,600, especially as a debt to another, would be spurned by a man who has been for years dealing in thousands of acres in land grants. And the course of the matter justified the suspicion.

For on February 3, 1893, the territory came to the conclusion that "waiting was weary, too weary." Its collector was complaining that, as a consequence of his innumerable pilgrimages to the shrine which Mr. Catron had erected within the walls built of this self-same brick, his shoes wore away with the week and his salary was wholly devoted to paying for sole-leather. Accordingly patience ceased to be a virtue on February 3, 1893, and upon that day the solicitor general filed a suit under the title of the territory against Thomas B. Catron, which was duly numbered 3,240 by Clerk Goshorn. This suit alleges that on the 31st day of May, 1891, the said Catron was then and there indebted to the said territory for price and value of goods bargained, sold, and delivered by plaintiff to defendant at defendant's request. Gen. Bartlett concludes by making the final touching statement, "yet defendant, not regarding his said promises and undertakings, has not as yet paid said sums of money nor any or either of them nor any part thereof." Accompanying this petition to the court was a bill of particulars, as set forth above.

Mr. Catron immediately entered an appearance in his own defence and on June 13, 1893, the case was set for trial on June 26, 1893. The case was not tried on that day and went over to December 11, when it was set for trial on the 14th.

On December 12, all the possible resources for delay having been exhausted, Mr. Catron owned up in court language as follows:

"Case No. 3,240.—Now comes the above named defendant in his own proper person and confesses judgment therein in the sum of \$1,802.11, and authorizes

the clerk to enter such judgment of record.

\* "T. B. CATRON."

Judgment was entered up accordingly on December 18, 1893, for that amount. That the public may understand how \$1,802.11 was arrived at, it is proper to state that interest on accounts run after six months from the date of the last item, and in the absence of express agreement the rate is 6 per cent. Accordingly, the interest from January, 1892, to December, 1893, was \$185.84, which added to the original debt of \$1,616.27, gave the amount of the judgment, \$1,802.11.

It is, however, as all who have ever participated in a law suit well know, one thing to get a judgment and another thing to get the money.

So the territory discovered most emphatically in this case; for from December, 1893, up to yesterday, the judgment rested upon the docket calmly awaiting new developments.

These long looked for "new developments" came last Thursday at Socorro, when Mr. Catron, having thrice spurned the crown, finally became a willing victim and the leader of the republican forces of '94. It is intimated by some that one ground of his hesitancy in accepting was the fact his acceptance would involve the payment of this debt, which unpaid would not give a pleasant tint to the color of his canvass.

At any rate, Mr. Catron accepted the nomination; Mr. Joseph got on his trail, and as a consequence there was filed yesterday in the clerk's office the following:

No. 3,240—The judgment heretofore recovered in the above entitled action having been paid to the territorial treasurer in the full sum of \$1,802.11 and by him placed to the 'convicts earnings fund,' the said judgment is hereby satisfied and released of record.

EDWARD L. BARTLETT,

Solicitor General of the territory of New Mexico.

It would seem, however, that even in making this tardy satisfaction of a debt of over three years standing, Mr. Catron was determined that his record as a "dodger" should not be broken; for it is worthy of remark that \$1,802.11 due on December 23, 1893, is a good deal more than \$1,802.11 due yesterday. The territorial laws, with which Mr. Catron claims to be quite familiar, are very explicit on this point. Section 1,735 of the New Mexico laws says:

"Judgment and decrees for the payment of money shall draw the same rate of interest with the contract on which they are rendered."

Now this debt before judgment drew 6 per cent. so that the amount due when Treas. Palen received \$1,802.11 yesterday was not \$1,802.11, but that amount with \$81.09 additional for interest since last December.

In his haste to pay his debts as a preliminary to his campaign, Mr. Catron has doubtless ignored this small amount as he has persistently ignored the principal for the last three or four years. As for Treas. Palen, he doubtless considers the territory fortunate in getting any of this money at all.

In addition to aiding the territorial treasurer at this time, the payment of this money by Mr. Catron yesterday caused a thrill of ecstatic pleasure to run through the whole circle of republican politicians; and at this writing this thrill is being transmitted to the henchmen in every part of the territory. The reason of this state of affairs is that Mr. Catron's